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The light it flew in flashing splinters  
 Away from those burning, revolving centres ;  
 While the gems on the lady's flying skirts  
 Gave out their light in jets and spirts.  
 Poor Mackerel gazed in mute dismay  
 At this unprecedented display :  
 "Oh, stop, love, stop !" he cried at last ,  
 But she only flew more wild and fast,  
 While the flutes and fiddles, bugle and drum,  
 Followed as if their time had come.

She went at such a bewildering pace  
 Nobody saw the lady's face,  
 But only a ring of emerald light  
 From the crown she wore on that fatal night.  
 Whether the stilts were propelling her,  
 Or she the stilts, none could aver.  
 Around and around the magnificent hall  
 Mrs. Mackerel danced at her own grand ball.

"As the twig is bent the tree's inclined ;"  
 This must have been a case in kind.  
 "What's in the blood will sometimes show—"  
 Round and around the wild stilts go.

I had been whispered many a time  
 That when poor Mack was in his prime  
 Keeping that little retail store,  
 He had fallen in love with a ballet-girl,  
 Who gave up fame's entrancing whirl  
 To be his own, and the world's no more.  
 She made him a faithful, prudent wife—  
 Ambitious, however, all her life.  
 Could it be that the soft, alluring waltz  
 Had carried her back to a former age,  
 Making her memory play her false,  
 Till she dreamed herself on the gaudy stage ?  
 Her crown a tinsel crown—her guests  
 The pit that gazes with praise and jests ?


"Pride," they say, "must have a fall—"  
 Mrs. Mackerel was very proud—  
 And now she danced at her own grand ball,  
 While the music swelled more fast and loud.

The gazers shuddered with mute affright,  
 For the stilts burned now with a bluish light,  
 While a glimmering, phosphorescent glow  
 Did out of the lady's garments flow.  
 And what was that very peculiar smell ?  
 Fish, or brimstone ? no one could tell.  
 Stronger and stronger the odor grew,  
 And the stilts and the lady burned more blue ;  
 'Round and around the long saloon,  
 While Mackerel gazed in a partial swoon,  
 She approached the throng, or circled from it,  
 With a flaming train like the last great comet ;  
 Till at length the crowd  
 All groaned aloud,  
 For her exit she made from her own grand ball  
 Out of the window, stilts and all.

None of the guests can really say  
 How she looked when she vanished away.  
 Some declare that she carried sail  
 On a flying fish with a lambent tail ;  
 And some are sure she went out of the room  
 Riding her stilts like a witch a broom,  
 While a phosphorescent odor followed her track :  
 Be this as it may, she never came back.

Since then, her friends of the gold-fish fry  
 Are in a state of unpleasant suspense,  
 Afraid, that unless they unselfishly try  
 To make better use of their dollars and sense  
 To chasten their pride, and their manners mend  
 They may meet a similar shocking end.

### AN ART HOMILY.

NDER the head of "Another  
 Picture, and the Best of All," the  
 editor of the *Milwaukee Daily*,  
 Wisconsin, gives us this pleasant  
 and suggestive homily :

"Pictures are next to books, in  
 the pleasure they afford to the cultivated  
 mind. And even to all persons these  
 have a charm for the senses—for that part  
 of the mind which feels rather than thinks.  
 Through this influence the heart is culti-  
 vated to greater refinement and purity,  
 and the more the heart is cultivated, the  
 better will be the actions and lives of men.  
 Pictures therefore, in a measure, educate  
 and improve us. Pictures are, therefore,  
 a blessing. And we are always glad to  
 see good pictures distributed through the  
 community. While they are improving  
 in their influence, they are more readily  
 studied by the masses than books. The  
 masses are apt to be too much engaged in  
 toil, or too indifferent, to pore over books.

"But pictures catch their eye as they  
 pass through the streets. They stop at a  
 show window, and take in the lesson of a  
 fine picture in a few minutes, and the seed  
 goes into their hearts, and sprouts and  
 grows up to the perfect grain. You have  
 seen the street crowd stop and gather  
 about bookstore windows, to look at the  
 pictures hung inside ; they are as intent  
 and earnest over them as children over  
 simpler pictures. There is no study of the  
 mind, but the eye is charmed and fascinated,  
 and through that the heart is improved,  
 and men made better. We welcome,  
 therefore, the fine pictures which are  
 annually distributed through the country  
 by the Cosmopolitan Art Association.  
 The best engraving they have yet pub-  
 lished, is the one for the coming season,  
 entitled, *Shakspeare and His Friends*.  
 In addition to a veritable portrait of the  
 immortal bard, it contains authentic por-  
 traits of Raleigh, Ben Jonson, Beaumont,  
 Fletcher, Bacon, Southampton, Dekker,  
 Dorset, and others, admirably grouped,  
 and forming a noble collection of worthies.  
 It is a superior engraving, and fairly  
 deserves a frame of gold."

### AT VESPERS.

By F. A. Parmenter.

Lo ! through the misty trembles of pure flame  
 That glowed upon the altar, marble-white,  
 I saw dream-shadowed faces sadly gaze,  
 And vanish, then, amid the purple night !

The mount of vision I that day had climbed,  
 And viewed the realm ideal spread below,  
 Amid whose golden borders dimly glides  
 The river of Existence, sad and slow.

And now, alas ! that I had once more come  
 Within the boundaries of the narrow Real,  
 Dim faces gleamed amid the altar-smoke,  
 Their foreheads stamped with God's high spirit-  
 seal !

And sadly beckoning me with ghostly hands,  
 Where perfumed censors idly swing in tune,  
 My soul its golden shackles would have burst,  
 And roamed as free as twilight winds of June ;

Ay, mounting o'er the dim cathedral-roof,  
 Its vesper-song hymn through the aisles of  
 Heaven ;  
 But ah ! it could not be, and till this day  
 Its galling bondage-chain remains unripen.

Yet soon, I know, will come the blessed hour,  
 When life shall realize its high ideal,  
 And in another sphere, fruition find,  
 Of those great things I now but dimly feel.

### TO A LADY—S. M. T.

A LADY asks that I would weave  
 A little wreath for memory's shrine,  
 A word and wish together wreathed  
 In fragrant bond and rhythmic line.

A lady asks ! in olden years  
 Those words had wrought a magic spell,  
 And eagle plumes and knightly spears  
 Had bent to know that maiden's will.

An hundred pennons flung in air,  
 An hundred lances couched in rest,  
 Had writ her name in conquest there  
 On cloven shields and broken crest.

Those times are past, those fires are spent,  
 And knight and maiden sunk to rest,  
 And ladies now are quite content  
 With gentler task and easier test.

So lady ! since thou ask'st a wreath,  
 With this I'll crown thy fair young brow,  
 And dare a hope that ever 'neath  
 A cloudless sky thy vessel's prow

May life's wide waters smoothly part,  
 And no dark spirits, from their deep,  
 With chilly finger touch thy heart,  
 To break thy dream and see thee weep.

W. R. D